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KOINER, C. W. *History of Pasadena's municipal light and power plant.* (Pasadena: Munic. Prtg. Dept. 1920. Pp. 32.)

WITHERS, H. *The case for capitalism.* (London: Nash. 1920. Pp. 255. 7s.)

*Kansas City street railway situation.* (Kansas City, Mo.: Chamber of Commerce. 1920. Pp. 48.)

### Labor and Labor Organizations

*Labor's Challenge to the Social Order.* By JOHN GRAHAM BROOKS. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1920. Pp. vi, 441. \$2.75.)

We have learned to expect incisive and informing discussions of American labor problems from the author of *As Others See Us*, *The Social Unrest*, and *American Syndicalism*, but the present book is more than a suggestive survey of the after-the-war labor situation. It is a stimulating and penetrating appreciation of the latest developments in the labor field on the background of Mr. Brooks's forty years' study of the upward movement of wage-earners throughout the world.

Like his other books, it is a human document rather than a dogmatic treatise. Conclusions are rarely stated didactically. Instead they reveal themselves in the author's skillful descriptions and analyses of the aims and accomplishments of the different groups which articulate "labor's challenge" and seek to substitute a better for the present "social order."

Considered merely as an accurate and absorbingly interesting record of recent developments in the labor field, the book merits the widest circulation. Its range is indicated by the more important chapter headings. Following a preliminary survey of current tendencies in *The Quest*, *A New Society*, and *World Lessons*, the book emphasizes certain contrasts in *The Struggle at its Worst*, *The Inner Revolution*, and *Capital on Its Good Behavior*. Analysis then begins with *What Does Labor Want Anyhow?* *Who Shall Spend My Savings?* and *How Long Shall We Work?* which are interspersed with suggestive descriptive chapters on *Lessons from the Communists*, *Socialism*, *Government Ownership*, and *Industrial Democracy at its Best* (*i.e.*, coöperation). On the solid foundation thus laid, the author bases a thoughtful appraisal of *Labor's Training for the Present Crisis*. He then does full justice to *The Employers' Case against the Union* and to *The New Profit Sharing*. A critical analysis of *Syndicalism*

leads up to a sympathetic account of The New Guild. The final chapter, The Greater Task, restates with the reënforcement of effective quotations some of his more important conclusions.

It is these conclusions that make the book something more than a valuable record of recent labor events. They entitle it to a place among the important recent constructive contributions to economic literature. At the risk of seeming to ascribe dogmatic opinions to an author whose greatest merit is freedom from any trace of dogmatism, I must attempt to summarize them.

Foremost is recognition of the immense value of education in practical democracy that comes from the efforts of wage-earners to better their situation. Trade unionists, socialists, and coöperators, "the three most powerful labor groups," are all learning by doing how to secure effective leadership and effective joint action where common interests are at stake. This education has already taught wage-earners to understand the value and limitations of such democratic devices as the initiative, the referendum, and the recall. It has made them critical of the demagogue and appreciative of the honest and able executive. It is preparing them for widening participation in the responsibilities of industry.

Since these constructive movements are providing this indispensable education, a second conclusion is that no social policy could be more suicidal than one that would attempt to suppress trade unionism, socialism, or coöperation. In the author's view, "The Social Order is threatened on two sides: by a raw communism, and by a reactionary capitalism." The best protection against these extremes, he thinks, is the constructive leadership which must inevitably result from the efforts of trade unionists, socialists, and coöperators to realize their respective programs. As they succeed, these movements are bound to become conservative. By allowing them free scope, we may secure progress through experimentation and avoid the disastrous consequences of violent revolution. "It is these agencies which offer the possessing classes their chance."

In desiring to "offer the possessing classes their chance," the author indicates a third conclusion. Despite the evils and abuses that have been associated with it, he is persuaded that the institution of private property should and will survive not merely as concerns consumable wealth but as regards many of the means and agencies of production. He shows that this is the conclusion even of working as contrasted with dogmatic socialism.

Another significant view is that the future politically and industrially will belong in all countries to labor. If the "possessing classes" survive, as he thinks they will, it will be not because they retain their dominant position, but because the representatives of labor learn by experience that the incentives of ownership and returns from ownership cannot be dispensed with without loss to wage-earners as well as capitalists.

For Mr. Brooks entertains no illusions about the difficulties that will confront labor when it is charged with responsibility for keeping production efficient. With warm sympathy with so-called "radical" aspirations, he combines full knowledge of the inefficiencies of government ownership and operation. Appreciating the limitations of political control, he is more hopeful of the future of guild than of state socialism. But as to both, his reiterated opinion is that only experimentation can demonstrate what limits are desirable. That in the long run a substantial place will be left for private ownership, and operation of industry is, as already indicated, his personal expectation.

This bare statement of conclusions does such scant justice to the author's own method of presenting his views that I must end with a few quotations. In an early chapter he indicates his mental attitude toward proposed changes thus:

No one—except youthful iconoclasts—knows with any precision how society is to develop; what form it will take or what names will fit it best. From temperamental preference, we may feel and express strong opinions on the society that is to be as we swing between conservative and radical extremes. But the future is so far hidden from us: the conceivable alternatives are so many, that allowance must be made for industrial and political unfoldings very different from those on which we happen severally to have set our hearts. . . . It is because we have no certainty . . . that ways must be kept open for well nigh infinite experiment (p. 108).

Later he remarks: "We are deluged with advice about the workman's need of education. It is excellent counsel for labor needs it, but for the unavoidable changes before us, the employer and the rest of us need it quite as much" (p. 112).

Condemnation of all policies of suppression he voices as follows:

It must be our one reply to radical protests of every sort,—“You shall have the fairest chance to speak out what is in you and the largest opportunity which social cohesion permits to state your case and to try out your scheme before all men.” In spite of inherent defects of socialist theory and practice, it is criminal to shut the door on further tentative trial of it. These “socializers of the three rents”

may be nearer right than their individualist opponents. They have proved already that parts of their program are strictly in line with progressive society. Because of our ignorance we should take the risks of further trial. (Pp. 418-419.)

*Labor's Challenge to the Social Order* is a notable signpost pointing the path to "the ways of peace and good will among men." No one can read it without realizing how momentous are the social choices before us nor being strengthened in the belief that with teachers like John Graham Brooks to guide, they will be wisely made.

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*The Labor Market.* By DON D. LESCOHIER. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1919. Pp. xii, 338. \$2.25.)

Professor Lescohier, of the University of Wisconsin, aims to prove the necessity for national machinery for the control of the problem of employment and to furnish information of value both to students and to employment office managers. His book is a concrete and positive study of American conditions. Beveridge's work on *Unemployment* is taken as the foundation upon which all subsequent writers have builded and the endeavor is to study American conditions with the same scientific spirit that Beveridge has used in his study of the British field. Professor Lescohier was formerly superintendent of the Minnesota Public Employment Office and also chief statistician of the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry and so has had unusual opportunities for a practical study of the problems.

Part one, Supply and Demand Factors in the Labor Market, is a presentation of the facts of the problem and a statement of the causes of unemployment. The fact of unemployment even in prosperous times cannot be gainsaid. The American employer has been able to assume as a matter of course that there would be idle men at his gate this morning, tomorrow morning, every morning. He has accepted orders upon the security of that expectation. Although war conditions may have mitigated the situation somewhat, the time for indifference has passed.

American employers and the American government are being held responsible in the minds of the workers for the hardships which they suffer through irregular employment. . . . The maintenance of a labor reserve for each establishment, or at least in each locality, that is adequate to meet the employers' needs at times of normal maxi-